

Message Text

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UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 KHARTOUM 1137

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FOR: STATE CU/AF

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SUBJECT: COUNTRY PLAN: BILATERAL COMMUNICATION RELATIONSHIP

REF: USIA 4347

SUDAN ATTAINED TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE JANUARY 1978. DURING MOST OF ITS HISTORY AS AN INDEPENDENT COUNTRY IT WAS SHARPLY DIVIDED ALONG NORTH-SOUTH LINES. IT FOUGHT A SEVENTEEN-YEAR CIVIL WAR THAT SPRANG ESSENTIALLY FROM THE GREAT DIVIDE BETWEEN ARAB-AFRICA (ISLAM) AND BLACK AFRICA (PAGAN OR CHRISTIAN). THE PRESENT LEADER OF THE COUNTRY SUCCESSFULLY STOPPED THE FIGHTING AND UNITED THE COUNTRY IN 1972. THE SPAST SIX YEARS HAVE SEEN THE SLOW GROWTH OF A NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND IDENTITY. THE SENSITIVITIES THAT REMAIN IN THE NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS CREATE COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS BECAUSE NORTHERNERS BELIEVE OUTSIDERS ARE OFTEN OVER-CONCERNED WITH THE SOUTH WHILE SOUTHERNERS BELIEVE THE SOUTH TO BE OVER-LOOKED IN THE USUAL EMPHASIS ON KHARTOUM AND ENVIRONS. THE DIFFICULTIES OF COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORTATION IN A COUNTRY OF SUDAN'S SIZE COUPLED WITH THE POST'S LIMITED RESOURCES MADE PAST AVOIDANCE OF THIS NORTH-SOUTH PROBLEM RELATIVELY EASY. HOWEVER, AS COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORTATION IMPROVE AND AS ECONOMIC

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DEVELOPMENT ACCELERATES, THE SOUTH WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT. CONSEQUENTLY SOME PROGRAMMING IN JUBA, THE SOUTHERN CAPITAL, WOULD SERVE TO EMPHASIZE OUR BELIEF IN THE UNITY OF SUDAN--ONE NATION, THE MEETING POINT OF ARABS AND AFRICANS. ONE THING SOUTHERN SUDANESE POLITICIANS MIGHT LEARN FROM U.S. HISTORY SINCE 1865 IS THAT PEACE CAN BE WON BY ATTAINING AND HOLDING POWER AT THE CENTER AS POLITICIANS FROM OUR SOUTHERN

STATES DID. WHILE OUR PAST MAY HAVE SOME RELEVANCE TO SUDAN'S FUTURE, OF MORE IMMEDIATE CONCERN TO THE COUNTRY IS THE RECOVERY OF ITS OWN "USEABLE PAST" AND THE CONTRIBUTION ITS PAST CAN MAKE TO ITS FUTURE. WE CAN HELP IN THIS TASK BY SENDING AMERICAN SCHOLARS TO SUDAN, ESPECIALLY ANTHROPOLOGISTS, HISTORIANS, POLITICAL SCIENTISTS AND SOCIOLOGISTS. THEY WILL BE WELCOMED BECAUSE SUDAN IS A REMARKABLY OPEN SOCIETY EVEN THOUGH IT IS A ONE-PARTY STATE WITH GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED MEDIA. THE ATTEMPTS OF THE PRESENT ONE-PARTY GOVERNMENT TO INVOLVE ITS MAJOR OPPONENTS IN THE POLITICAL LIFE OF THE COUNTRY WILL SURELY MAKE THE REGIME APPEAR MORE DEMOCRATIC THAN IT HAS IN THE PAST. THE PRESENT "NATIONAL RECONCILIATION" MAY EVEN RESULT IN MORE FREEDOM FOR THE MEDIA TO EXPRESS A WIDER VARIETY OF OPINION. IN ADDITION, THE PRESENT LEADERSHIP CLEARLY WANTS AS MUCH INVOLVEMENT AS POSSIBLE IN GOVERNMENT AT THE LOCAL LEVEL TO SUPPORT NATIONAL UNITY; CONSEQUENTLY, IT HAS INITIATED A POLICY OF DECENTRALIZATION OF GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES. WE CAN SHARE WITH THE SUDANESE WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ABOUT LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, THE STATES AND MUNICIPALITIES. THE REVERSE FLOW OF SUDANESE TO THE U.S. NOT ONLY TO LEARN FIRST-HAND ABOUT AMERICA BUT ALSO TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCE WILL CONTRIBUTE TO U.S. UNDERSTANDING OF SUDAN AND ESPECIALLY OF THE COMPLEXITIES OF A CROSS-CULTURE DIALOGUE WITH A COUNTRY THAT HAS PARTICIPATED, AND WILL CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE IN, BOTH THE ARAB AND AFRICAN EXPERIENCE.

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JUST AS ITS INTERNAL AFFAIRS HAVE BEEN TROUBLED NOT ONLY BY A LONG CIVIL WAR BUT ALSO BY POLITICAL TURMOIL LEADING TO COUPS AND COUNTER COUPS SO TOO HAVE ITS EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SUFFERED FROM RAPID CHANGE. BECAUSE OF ITS COLONIAL PAST, THE COUNTRY STARTED WITH A WESTERN ORIENTATION, MOVED TOWARD THE EAST BLOC AND THEN MOVED TOWARD A KIND OF NEUTRALITY AGAINST THE BLOC, AND HAS RECENTLY MOVED TOWARD AN ANTI-SOVIET IF NOT PRO-WESTERN BIAS. IT IS CAREFUL TO PRESENT ITS CURRENT POSITION IN SUCH A WAY SO AS NOT TO LOSE ITS GOOD STANDING IN THE THIRD WORLD. WHILE U.S.- SUDAN RELATIONS FOLLOW IN ESSENCE THIS PATTERN, THEY DEVIATE FROM IT BECAUSE OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION. DURING THE EARLY YEARS OF SUDANESE INDEPENDENCE WE HAD AN AID MISSION WHICH THOUGH NOT LARGE BY STANDARDS OF THE FIFTIES AND EARLY SIXTIES DID TRAIN MORE THAN 1500 SUDANESE AS WELL AS DEMONSTRATE U.S. CAPACITY FOR GETTING THINGS DONE. THE ARAB-ISRAELI WAR OF JUNE 1967 LED TO A BREAK IN THE RELATIONS AND EVEN AFTER THEIR RENEWAL IN 1972 FOR MOST OF THE NEXT FOUR YEARS THE RELATIONS WERE COOL AND CORRECT ON OUR SIDE BECAUSE OF THE MURDER BY PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS OF TWO AMERICAN AMBASSADORS AND SUDAN'S SUBSEQUENT RELEASE OF THEIR KILLERS. HOWEVER, SINCE PRESIDENT NIMEIRI'S VISIT IN JUNE 1976, OUR RELATIONSHIPS HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY CLOSE AS REFLECTED IN AMERICAN

WILLINGNESS TO SELL SUDAN 6 C-130 AND 12 F-5 AIRCRAFT AND
SUDANESE WILLINGNESS TO SUPPORT AMERICAN AND EGYPTIAN STEPS TO
SOLVE THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE. THIS INCREASING INTERACTION HAS
RAISED UNREALISTIC SUDANESE EXPECTATIONS REGARDING WHAT WE WILL
DO HERE. BECAUSE MANY OF THE PRESENT LEADERSHIP REMEMBER 1957-67
AS THE GOLDEN DECADE OF AMERICAN AID, THEY FIND THE PRESENT SLOW
PACE OF OUR AID DISAPPOINTING AND DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND.
COMPOUNDING THESE FEELINGS IS THEIR BELIEF IN THE NEAR OMNIPOTENCE
OF THE U.S. WHICH CAUSES THEM TO WONDER WHY WE DON'T DO WHAT THEY
SEE AS SO OBVIOUSLY NECESSARY: INCREASE AID. THEY CONSTANTLY
UNDER-ESTIMATE THE INTRICACIES OF OUR POLITICAL AND LEGISLATIVE
PROCESSES.

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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 KHARTOUM 1137

EXPECTATION AND DISAPPOINTMENT ARE NOT CONFINED TO AID, FOR OUR
FOREIGN POLICY ALSO EVOKES SIMILAR RESPONSES. SUDAN LEADERS SEE
THEMSELVES AS HEEDING OUR PLEAS FOR SUPPORT FOR MODERATION IN
THE MIDDLE EAST. CONSEQUENTLY, THEY HAVE DIFFICULTY
UNDERSTANDING WHAT THEY PERCEIVE AS OUR SHILLY-SHALLYING REGARDING
RUSSIAN AND CUBAN INTERVENTION IN AFRICA. BECAUSE OUR POLICY
VIS-A-VIS THE HORN OF AFRICA HAS BEGUN TO CONVERGE WITH THEIRS,
IT MAKES SOME SENSE TO THEM, BUT IT IS STILL LESS ACTIVIST THAN
THEY DESIRE. BOTH EXPECTATION AND DISAPPOINTMENT ARISE FROM A
FAILURE TO UNDERSTAND THE COMPLEXITIES OF OUR FOREIGN-POLICY
MAKING PROCESS. COUNTERING THESE RESPONSES REQUIRES NOT ONLY
IMMEDIATE SHORT RANGE ACTIVITIES: PERSONAL CONTACT, MEDIA
PLACEMENT, LIBRARY OUTREACH AND VISITS BY AMERICAN SPECIALISTS
BUT ALSO ATTEMPTS TO GET SOME EXPLANATION OF THESE PROCESSES
INTO THE COUNTRY'S UNIVERSITY CURRICULA. SENDING SELECTED
SUDANESE TO THE U.S. ON PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO INCREASE UNDER-
STANDING OF OUR SYSTEM WILL ALSO MAKE EXPECTATIONS MORE REALISTIC
THAN THEY NOW ARE.
PRESIDENT NIMEIRI'S VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES IN JUNE 1976
STIMULATED IN THE AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY AN AWARENESS OF

SUDAN'S INVESTMENT POSSIBILITIES, ESPECIALLY IN AGRICULTURE, AND OF THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSTRUCTION OF SUDANESE INFRA-STRUCTURE PROJECTS; INVESTMENT AND CONSTRUCTION WILL USE AMERICAN EXPERTISE AND PRODUCTS. THE SUDANESE ARE EAGER FOR THE INVESTMENT, THE EXPERTISE, AND THE PRODUCTS, BUT AS PRESIDENT NIMEIRI RECENTLY WARNED THE FOUNDING MEETING OF SUDAN-AMERICAN BUSINESS UNCLASSIFIED

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COUNCIL, SUDAN EXPECTS AMERICANS TO INVEST THEIR OWN MONEY NOT MERELY TO PUT TOGETHER TRI-G TERAL DEALS INVOLVING SUDANESE NATURAL RESOURCE, AMERICAN EXPERTISE AND ARAB PETRO-DOLLARS. IN ADDITION TO THESE EXPECTATIONS WHICH MAY CAUSE PROBLEMS, MANY OF THE SUDANESE ELITE ARE SUSPICIOUS OF THE WESTERN INVESTMENT, A SUSPICION USUALLY RESULTING IN ATTACKS ON MULTI-NATIONAL CORPORATIONS AS THE STALKING HORSES OF NEO-COLONIALISM AND NEO-IMPERIALISM. ARISING FROM SUDAN'S COLONIAL EXPERIENCE, THIS SUSPICION CONTINUES TO EXIST ALTHOUGH THOUSANDS OF SUDANESE HAVE BEEN EDUCATED AND TRAINED IN THE WEST--WELL OVER 2000 IN THE U.S. ALONE. THIS WESTERN-TRAINED AND ORIENTED ELITE ARE THE NATURAL CHANNEL FOR DEALING WITH THE PROBLEMS CREATED BY THIS SUSPICION.

THIS GROUP PROVIDES US WITH A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO NUTURE CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN SUDAN AND THE U.S. EVEN THOUGH ITS MEMBERS COME FROM A DIFFERENT CULTURE MOST OF THEM HAVE HAD THEIR UNIVERSITY TRAINING IN ENGLISH, EITHER IN THE SUDAN, THE UNITED KINGDOM, OR THE U.S. THEY ARE INTERESTED IN AMERICAN ATTITUDES, POLICIES, TECHNOLOGY, AND CULTURE. THEY LOOK TO US FOR ADVICE-AND EXPERTISE; THEY ARE KEEN TO USE THE U.S. AS A MODEL IN A VARIOUS WAYS: THEIR MEDIA, THEIR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND THEIR AGRICULTURE. THIS RECEPTIVITY AND ACCESIBILITY ARE REAL COMMUNICATION PLUSES.

THE AMBASSADOR HAS READ AND APPROVED.

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